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NUMBER 16

THE TRUTH ABOUT ISRAELI PEACE OFFERS

ARAB INFORMATION CENTER

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Table of Contents

I. THE SEARCH FOR PEACE	1
II. "PEACE OFFERS": A MASK FOR AGGRESSION	5
1. The Infamous Massacre of Deir Yassin	5
2. The Massacre of Nasr El Din	6
3. The Wadi-Araba Tragedy	7
4. The Attack on Ghor As-Safi and the Christmas Massacre near Bethlehem	7
5. The Raid on Falameh	8
6. The Massacre of Qibya	9
7. Attack on the Jordanian Village of Nahalin	9
8. Zionist Attack of February 28, 1955, on Gaza	10
9. The Raid at Khan Yunis and Occupation of Al-Auja ..	11
10. Attacks upon the Syrian Frontier and the Egyptian Post at Sabha	11
11. The Onslaught on Tiberias	12
12. The Massacre of Civilians at Gaza	13
13. Invasion of Egypt — October 1956	13
14. The Tawafiq Incident	14
III. ISRAEL'S POLICY: WAR, DEFIANCE AND EXPANSION	15
1. War an Instrument of Policy.....	16
2. Force a Means of Holding Additional Arab Territory	17
3. Internationalization of Jerusalem A "Wicked" Counsel	17
4. The Arabs of Palestine Have No Room in Their Own Country	18
5. Defiance A Pattern of Behaviour	18
6. Expansion As An Avowed Objective	19
7. Israel's Hostility Toward Any Peace Move	20
The Bandung Conference	20
The Dulles Peace Proposal	20
Eden Peace Proposal	21
Yugoslav Mediation	22
Attempts to Find A Peaceful Solution by the Kennedy Administration	23
IV. THE PROSPECTS FOR THE FUTURE	24

I. THE SEARCH FOR PEACE

Peace is yearned for today by all the peoples of the world, especially those who have suffered from colonialism and the useless miseries of war. The search for peace is the preoccupation of every responsible statesman. Therefore, peace offers of any kind by any party to a conflict are welcomed by public opinion the world over. In their dedication to the cause of peace the Arab people are no exception. The situation has arisen, however, wherein offers to resolve differences have been used by Israel merely as propaganda slogans. It is indeed a tragedy that the desire of the world for solutions to outstanding problems should be deviously exploited as a device for perpetuating the multiple injustices which now pervade the Holy Land. For this reason it is proposed to discuss here the Israeli peace offers and thus to ascertain the motivating forces behind them.

The validity of a statement of any type made by an individual or a state can, it would seem, best be measured by examining their past record for truthfulness and sincerity, and then by observing the attending remarks and qualifications attached to the statement in question. Thus to determine the meaning of Israeli peace offers it is first pertinent to survey the past actions taken by Israel in the wake of such peace offers, which indeed indicate that the offers were only designed to disguise subsequent aggressions. In the second place, a study of additional Israeli statements concerning the Arabs is neces-

sary, for only then does the meaning of their offers become clear. By her own words and conditions, Israel seeks to predetermine the outcome before negotiation, and thus her peace offers are virtually demands for capitulation. It is these two aspects of the question that determine the amount of faith that can be placed in Israeli overtures.

Regarding the past record of Israel, one must make the observation that Mr. Ben-Gurion's obsession that "force of arms, not formal resolutions, will determine the issue" seems to have been followed religiously by his armed forces. Even at the outset in 1948, before any Arab soldier from the surrounding countries had set foot in Palestine in an effort to protect the Palestinian Arabs, defenseless villages were attacked in broad daylight by Zionist terrorist organizations. Before May 15, 1948, when Israel was formally created, and at a time when the United Nations was still debating the future of Palestine, Arab towns and villages were attacked and their inhabitants forced out. Mr. Ben-Gurion himself admits that as early as April 1948, "our War . . . swung decisively from defense to attack." Thus during and following the first attempt at reaching a settlement, Israel had already unleashed her forces of aggression. She had indeed thwarted the Partition Plan before its terms were ever carried out.

The wrecking of the Partition Plan by Israel was followed by another notorious act of defiance in relation to what is known as the Lausanne Protocol. On May 12, 1949, the Arab States and Israel signed the said Protocol under the auspices of the Palestine Conciliation Commission, which was established by the General Assembly in 1949 to work out a peace settlement between Israel and the Arab States. By virtue of the Protocol both parties undertook to settle the Palestine Question within the framework of the Partition Plan of November 1947. The Arab countries, thereby, formally committed themselves to a policy of peace. It was later revealed, however, that Israel's agreement to the provisions of this Protocol, which was subsequent to the so-called Arab invasion of Israel, was only for the purpose of gaining admission to the United Nations. In the Israeli Yearbook of 1950 the following revealing statement occurred:

"Some members of the United Nations wished at this opportunity to test Israel's intentions with regard to the refugees, boundaries, and Jerusalem issues, before approving its application for admission. In a way, Israel's attitude at the Lausanne talks aided its Delegation at Lake Success in its endeavor to obtain the majority required for admission."

The General Assembly admitted Israel as a member, noting the

declaration of the Israeli representative to the effect that his Government "unreservedly accepts the obligations of the United Nations Charter and undertakes to honor them from the day when it becomes a member of the United Nations." This statement envisaged the implementation of the U.N. Partition Plan in relation to boundaries and the internationalization of Jerusalem, coveted by the three monotheistic religions, as well as the well-known resolution of December 1948, calling for the repatriation and compensation of the Palestinian Arab refugees. However, soon after Israel had succeeded in misleading the members of the international community, she repudiated her signature to the Lausanne Protocol. Once again, the sanctity of an international agreement meant nothing to Israel.

The record of Israeli defiance and contempt for world opinion comes to further light in her repeated flouting of United Nations resolutions for the past thirteen years. If Mr. Ben-Gurion is genuinely interested in peace in the Holy Land, why does he now stubbornly refuse to implement standing United Nations resolutions on Palestine, those same resolutions of which he says they "no longer live, nor will they rise again"? Israel today is not the Israel contemplated by the United Nations under the Partition Plan of 1947. She still occupies one-third in excess of what was assigned to her and refuses to accept the internationalization of Jerusalem as adamantly as she refuses to allow the Arabs of Palestine to return to their ancestral homes.

Israel is the only member-state in the United Nations who has drawn no less than six condemnations and censures from the Security Council and the General Assembly. She has consistently obstructed the supervisory functioning of the United Nations and boycotted the Mixed Armistice Commissions. She has ignored fourteen repeated United Nations resolutions calling for the repatriation or compensation of the Arab refugees. Furthermore, following her participation in the Anglo-French colonial aggression against Egypt in 1956, she refused to allow the United Nations Emergency Force into the territory she now occupies.

This is only a glimpse of the past record of Israeli lawlessness in regard to the Partition Plan, the Lausanne Protocol and the wishes of the United Nations. However, this is not the total picture, for Israel has not only flouted all U.N. efforts and disregarded all international agreements, but she has exploited these for her own ends. As will be demonstrated in Part II herein, each Israeli peace offer

has been a camouflage for an armed adventure indiscriminately directed at innocent men, women and children.

In addition to the linking of peace with a consistent pattern of aggression, the solemn pronouncements of Israeli leaders have also demonstrated that her peace slogans are not truly intended to achieve a just solution to the Palestine Question. By making it clear that she will not, under any circumstances, accept the internationalization of Jerusalem, renounce extra territory acquired by force, or repatriate the Arab refugees, she ignores the minimum standards of justice afforded by standing United Nations resolutions, and certainly leaves nothing for negotiation. Just recently, during the last session of the General Assembly, Israel not only made it clear that she refuses to repatriate the refugees, but she added a grim note of irony to an already sad situation by stating that compensation to the refugees would not even be considered unless international financial aid was made available. Part III of this brief survey contains the pronouncements of Israeli officials which prove beyond any doubt that Israel has set the outcome of the negotiations for which she clamors. Therefore, by insisting on negotiations outside the United Nations, her attitude is tantamount to demanding the unconditional surrender of the Arabs.

In contrast to the kind of peace to which Israel has paid lip-service, the Arabs, as repeatedly declared by their responsible leaders, seek a genuine and honorable peace in the Holy Land, based on justice and equity within the framework of the United Nations. Significantly, their quest for peace does not demand a settlement on their own terms, but on the very same terms which were laid down by the original Partition Plan, the birth certificate of Israel. It is this solution which Israel refuses to accept today.

II. "PEACE OFFERS": A MASK FOR AGGRESSION

Statements regarding the desire for peace or the wish to negotiate with the Arabs have been cynically repeated by Israeli spokesmen during the past thirteen years. Unfortunately, the Arab countries have discovered time and again that these offers were merely double-talk, made in order to lull them into a false sense of security and to deceive a complacent world opinion by creating an artificial facade of Israeli innocence. The following samplings of statements made by responsible Zionist and Israeli authorities and the acts of aggression that occurred thereafter, reveal with startling clarity the motives which have fostered this superficial campaign for peace. After each of these "peace offers" an act of further aggression was committed against the Arabs.

1. THE INFAMOUS MASSACRE OF DEIR YASSIN

A statement issued on *March 20, 1948* by the Haganah High Command contained the following assertion:

"The Jewish State that is to come into being . . . will find the path to mutual understanding and true friendship with the Arab-peoples in the neighboring countries. . ."

Less than twenty days after this expression of the desire for "true friendship" with the Arab people, the Irgun Zvai Leumi, a

Zionist terrorist organization that spread havoc in the Holy Land, committed an outrageous act of terror against Deir Yassin, a village near Jerusalem. On April 9, 1948 Zionist forces attacked this defenseless Arab village without provocation. After looting everything of value, they turned to human booty, slaughtering without mercy 250 of the 300 men, women and children of the village. Some of the unfortunate women who survived were stripped of their clothes and herded into trucks. They were then paraded through the streets of the Jewish Quarter of Jerusalem and subjected to the insults of onlookers.

When the horror of this massacre became known, the murderers tried to conceal their crime. About 150 mutilated corpses were dumped into a well and access to the scene was prevented. When Mr. Jack Regenier, Representative of the International Red Cross, asked permission of the Jewish Agency to inspect the village he was delayed a whole day in order to allow the assassins time to clear the traces of their frightful act. In relating the facts Mr. Regenier stated that "the situation was simply horrible."

In the face of such an odious event, the Jewish Agency in Palestine issued a hypocritical statement expressing its alleged horror and disgust at the ghastly manner in which, what the Agency called "the occupation of Deir Yassin" had been carried out. However, only two days later the newspaper *Hamashkif*, organ of the Irgun, revealed the fact that the Haganah, the Agency's military organization, was well aware beforehand of Irgun designs against Deir Yassin.¹

2. THE MASSACRE AT NASR EL DIN

The following remark was contained in a declaration of the Zionist General Council, issued from Tel Aviv on *April 12, 1948*:

"At this hour . . . we turn to the Arabs in the Jewish State and our neighbours in adjacent territories with an appeal for brotherhood and peace."

Before two days had yet elapsed after the Zionist General Council's "appeal for brotherhood and peace," more innocent Arab blood was shed indiscriminately. On *April 14, 1948*, members of the Irgun and Stern terrorist organizations assaulted the Arab village of Nasr El Din, near Tiberias. The Deir Yassin horrors were repeated again. The entire population of Nasr El Din, consisting mainly of defense-

¹Admitting the perpetration of this crime, Menachem Begin, the leader of the Irgun in 1948, described the massacre in *The Revolt: Story of the Irgun*, New York, 1951, pp. 162-165.

less women and children, were attacked with machine guns and hand-grenades. Only forty women and children survived by fleeing to a neighboring Arab village. The rest were added to the long list of Zionist victims.

3. THE WADI-ARABA TRAGEDY

The following passage was contained in the text of a letter from Moshe Sharett, Israeli Minister for Foreign Affairs to the Chairman of the Palestine Conciliation Commission on *May 8, 1950*:

“ . . . the Government of Israel is willing to negotiate . . . to conclude a final settlement of all outstanding questions with a view to the establishment of permanent peace.”

After its establishment in 1948, the State of Israel pursued a deliberate policy of persecuting the Arabs who remained in the occupied part of Palestine, with the main objective of forcing them to leave their own country. The Israeli authorities set up large concentration camps throughout the country, in which untold atrocities were perpetrated.

In furthering this policy, which went to the extent of annihilation, on *May 31, 1950*, Israeli forces herded into trucks 120 Arab internees of one of the camps, Katra, and drove them to a place known as Wadi Araba in the barren desert between the Dead Sea and the Gulf of Aqaba. In promoting their desire to establish “permanent peace,” the Israelis forced these internees to proceed on foot in the direction of a mountain range in Jordan. The Israelis then opened fire, forcing their unfortunate victims to run in terror. Only 75% of them withstood the rigors of the trip. The rest perished from thirst and hunger in the desert. The Jordanian-Israeli Mixed Armistice Commission received evidence substantiating this incident from fifty of the survivors.

4. THE ATTACK ON GHOR AS-SAFI AND THE CHRISTMAS MASSACRE NEAR BETHLEHEM.

The following assertion was contained in the reply of the Israeli Delegation to proposals submitted by the Chairman of the Palestine Conciliation Commission at the Paris Conference on *September 21, 1951*:

“It has always been the earnest desire of my Government to see permanent peace established between Israel and her Arab neighbors. . .”

Following the Israeli Delegation's assertion of its Government's “earnest desire” for “permanent peace,” one finds the Israeli army speaking another language. Blatantly defying the Armistice Agree-

ment, an Israeli armed unit crossed the Jordanian frontier on the night of *September 25, 1951* and demolished a large number of houses in the village of Ghor As-Safi on the southern coast of the Dead Sea. The murder of twenty-five persons, including women and children, at this time was but the beginning of another reign of terror.

A little more than three months thereafter the occasion of Christmas eve was used as an opportunity for further surprise attacks by Israel. On the eve of *January 6, 1952* the Arab Christian community belonging to the Eastern Rite were celebrating Christmas, and most Arab policemen were in Bethlehem directing the traffic of pilgrims to the Church of the Nativity. At this time three houses were demolished over the heads of their unsuspecting occupants in the vicinity of Beit Jala, an Arab town on the western side of Bethlehem in Jordan. In the attack on one of the houses, located near the tomb of Rachel, all six members of the family were brutally murdered. This attack at Beit Jala was condemned by the Mixed Armistice Commission as another Israeli violation of the Armistice agreement.²

5. THE RAID ON FALAMEH

In a statement by Mr. Abba Eban, Representative of Israel to the United Nations, before the Ad Hoc Political Committee of the United Nations General Assembly, the following observation was made, on *January 9, 1952*:

“. . . the Arab and Israel peoples, united by so many bonds . . . may yet make this region the scene of a civilization worthy of its ancient and medieval past.”

Despite the honeyed words of Mr. Eban regarding the “bonds” between the Arab and Israeli people, on the night of *January 28, 1952* a regular Israeli army force crossed the demarcation line to attack once more. The two Jordanian villages of Falameh and Rantis were subjected to a four and one half hour attack, which resulted in the death of the Muhktar (elder) of Falameh and the death or injury of many of the other inhabitants of the village.

In his report to the Security Council on this raid, General Ben-nike, Chief of Staff of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization, stated that Israel’s military force was “estimated at 120 to 150 men,” using machine guns, hand-grenades and various explosives. For this act of aggression Israel was condemned by the Mixed Armistice Commission.³

²Hutchison, E. H. *Violent Truce*. New York, 1956, pp. 12-16.

³UN Doc. S/PV.630, Para. 13.

6. THE MASSACRE OF QIBYA

On *May 13, 1953* Mr. Ben-Gurion gave an interview to a United Press Correspondent, during which he explained:

“ . . . we want peace for its own sake. We know what war is.”

A few months thereafter, on *September 28, 1953*, the United Nations General Assembly was told, in the course of an address by Mr. Abba Eban, that:

“My Government continues to uphold the vision of a Middle East at peace within itself, uniting the efforts of its two kindred peoples to heal the wounds of aggressive violence. . .”

These two statements regarding Israel's desire for peace and wish to “heal the wounds of aggressive violence,” were followed by one of the most brutal massacres ever perpetrated by Israel. It occurred on the evening of *October 14, 1953*, but sixteen days after Mr. Eban's address to the United Nations. A fully equipped force from the Israeli regular army crossed the demarcation line and attacked the village of Qibya in Jordan. In a letter to the President of the Security Council, the Jordanian Minister to the United Nations stated that 42 Arab civilians were killed, 4 men and 38 women and children were wounded, and a mosque, school, and 40 houses destroyed.

The facts of this massacre are attested to by the report of the Chief of Staff of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization. He presented evidence indicating that this attack was carried out with thorough planning by the regular Israeli army. The village was shelled and partially destroyed first and then a battalion of soldiers moved in to kill all the remaining men, women and children they could find. His horror at the deed that had been perpetrated was matched by that of the rest of the world. Numerous countries expressed their regret and consternation. On November 24, 1953 the Security Council of the United Nations passed a resolution expressing “the strongest censure” of Israel's action at Qibya.⁴

7. ATTACK ON THE JORDANIAN VILLAGE OF NAHALIN

In the course of a press conference in Jerusalem on *December 11, 1953*, the following remark was made by Mr. Moshe Sharett, Israeli Minister for Foreign Affairs:

“There is also a major problem of our relations with the Arab States around us. All I can say on this is that the conclusion of permanent peace between us depends on them alone — on our part we are always ready for it.”

⁴UN Doc. S/3139/Rev. 2.

But three months after Mr. Sharett spoke these words, Israel demonstrated her readiness for "permanent peace" by launching an operation similar to that at Qibya against the village of Nahalin. On March 28, 1954, this village of 1000 persons, which lies inside Jordanian territory in the district of Bethlehem, was assaulted in the dead of night by an Israeli force. As in other well-planned attacks, the approaches to the town were mined to prevent reinforcements from arriving and part of the Israeli force acted as a cover outside the village while the attacking company sacked the mosque, bombed buildings, and fired on innocent civilians. Fortunately the resistance of the Jordanian National Guard, as well as the men of the village, prevented a massacre of the proportions of Qibya. Five National Guardsmen, one woman and three Arab Legionnaires were killed. Fourteen villagers and five more Legionnaires were wounded.

On April 30, 1954 this inhuman Israeli attack was condemned in the "strongest terms" by the Mixed Armistice Commission. The resolution of the Commission deeply deplored "the loss of innocent lives incurred as a result of the attack on Nahalin Village."⁵

8. ZIONIST ATTACK OF FEBRUARY 28, 1955 ON GAZA:

In an article by Moshe Dayan, Chief of Staff of the Israeli Forces, in *Foreign Affairs*, January 1955, the statement was made that:

"Israel has no aggressive designs against her neighbors."

Although the Gaza Strip had long been a target of Israeli aggressive designs, the raid of February 28, 1955 was indeed one of the most serious and treacherous ever made. On that night an Israeli armed force of two platoons penetrated five miles into Arab territory and executed a sneak attack upon several Egyptian guard stations and army centers. As a result, 38 Egyptians were killed and 31 wounded. Many of the casualties were caused by the ambushing of an army truck carrying Egyptian soldiers. After exploding a mine under the truck, Israeli soldiers descended from all sides to massacre its occupants. All were either killed or injured.

After reviewing the facts of this outrage, the Egyptian-Israeli Mixed Armistice Commission came to the conclusion on March 6, 1955 that this was "a prearranged and planned attack ordered by Israeli authorities" and "committed by Israeli regular army forces."⁶ General Burns, Chief of Staff of the UN Truce Supervision Organiza-

⁵UN Doc. S/3251.

⁶UN Docs. S/3373, and A/2935.

tion, also reported this attack to the Security Council, stating that "The character and extent of the operations, the damage done, and above all, the heavy casualties . . . make this a most serious violation of the armistice." Noting the conclusions of the Commission, as well as the report of General Burns, on March 29, 1955 the Security Council of the United Nations condemned this attack.⁷

9. THE RAID AT KHAN YUNIS AND THE OCCUPATION OF AL-AUJA

In an article in *Davar*, an Israeli newspaper, on *August 14, 1955*, Mr. David Ben-Gurion made the observation that:

"We must faithfully observe the conditions of the Armistice Agreements . . . We must . . . strive incessantly for relations of peace and cooperation between Israel and the Arab States."

It is indeed astounding to read Mr. Ben-Gurion's words in regard to compliance with the "conditions of the Armistice Agreements" in the light of the events that followed. On the night of *August 31, 1955*, an Israeli armed force made an attack on the villages of Khan Yunis and Bani Suheila. Scarcely three weeks later the demilitarized zone of Al-Auja was forcibly occupied by Israel, in clear violation of the Armistice Agreement with Egypt.

The Chief of Staff of the United Nations Truce Organization reported the attack on Khan Yunis in detail. He stated that the Israeli force which penetrated into Egyptian-controlled territory advanced to Khan Yunis and destroyed many buildings, including a hospital under construction and buildings in the neighboring village of Bani Suheila. Another attack was carried out on an Egyptian post east of Abasan as a result of which 36 persons were killed and 13 wounded.⁸

The entry and occupation of the demilitarized zone of Al-Auja was carried out by an Israeli force on September 20, 1955. In this instance the UN Representative on the scene was arrested and an Egyptian officer and two soldiers wounded.

10. ATTACKS UPON THE SYRIAN FRONTIER AND THE EGYPTIAN POST OF SABHA

Speaking before the United Nations General Assembly, Mr. Abba Eban, Representative of Israel to the United Nations, stated on *October 3, 1955*:

"In our conception, the Middle East is a region in which the Arab States and Israel have an unconditional duty to live together in peace side by side. .."

⁷UN Doc. S/3378.

⁸UN Doc. S/3430.

The Israeli "conception" of how "to live together in peace side by side" was clearly demonstrated a few weeks after the speech of Mr. Eban to the United Nations. On *October 22, 1955*, an Israeli armed unit violated the Syrian frontier and clashed with Syrian patrols, killing one officer and two soldiers before they were forced to withdraw. In its warning to the Israeli authorities regarding the many acts of aggression, the Mixed Armistice Commission referred to this violation as a "well-planned operation . . . carried out across the Syrian border in the vicinity of Alamine. . ."⁹

Ten days later an Israeli armed force comprising three infantry battalions invaded Egyptian territory and made a raid upon a frontier observation post at Sabha. A major battle ensued for seven and one-half hours. On November 3, 1955, the Secretary-General of the United Nations dispatched a note to Israeli authorities expressing "grave concern" over this action and protesting Israel's restriction of the free movement of UN observers before and during the attack.¹⁰

11. THE ONSLAUGHT ON TIBERIAS

In an address before the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. on *November 21, 1955*, Mr. Moshe Sharett, Israeli Minister for Foreign Affairs, stated that Israel was

" . . . ever ready to offer constructive contributions towards a peace settlement, and to conduct direct peace negotiations in a spirit of give and take . . ."

It was demonstrated on *December 11, 1955* that by "constructive contributions towards a peace settlement" Mr. Sharett evidently meant further attacks upon Arab territory. On this evening Israeli forces launched an attack along the entire length of the Syrian eastern shore of the lake of Galilee. In the course of the two-hour battle that ensued the Israelis employed planes, armoured cars and heavy artillery. The result of these "well-coordinated" attacks was: 56 Syrians killed, 9 wounded and 32 missing.¹¹

On January 19, 1956 the United Nations Security Council, after reviewing reports of the incident, condemned the Israeli onslaught on Tiberias. The Security Council reminded Israel of its past condemnations of "military action in breach of the General Armistice Agreements," and expressed its "grave concern at the failure of the Government of Israel to comply with its obligations."¹²

⁹UN Doc. S/3516.

¹⁰*New York Times*, November 4, 1955.

¹¹UN Doc. S/3516.

¹²UN Doc. S/3538.

12. THE MASSACRE OF CIVILIANS AT GAZA

In an address before visiting editors and commentators on *March 21, 1956*, Mr. Moshe Sharett again stated that:

“ . . . since the summer of 1948, we have made one attempt after another to induce our neighbors to enter into negotiations with us that might lead to a peace settlement.”

Shortly after this statement was made by Mr. Sharett, Israel displayed the manner in which she would attempt “to induce our neighbors to enter into negotiations. . .” A series of Israeli border violations and troop movements in the first days of April 1956 led up to the ruthless shelling of the Gaza area by Israel on *April 5, 1956*. On this day a barrage of artillery fire was directed at Deir el-Balah, while at the same time an Israeli patrol attacked an Egyptian post. This was followed by the shelling of the hapless civilians in Gaza, Khan Yunis and Ghaissan. The battle raged for ten hours and the center of the city of Gaza was shelled unmercifully. United Nations observers reported that during this attack on April 5th both the Gaza Emergency and Baptist hospitals were hit. As a result of this onslaught 59 civilians were killed and 102 wounded.¹³

13. INVASION OF EGYPT — OCTOBER 1956

During an address at the Jerusalem Press Club on *July 2, 1956*, the following remarks were made by Mrs. Golda Meir, Israeli Minister for Foreign Affairs:

“I should like to survey some of the basic considerations that guide our foreign policy.

“First and foremost comes peace; . . . Our policy has . . . always been one of peace. . .”

The treachery behind Mrs. Meir's statement that peace comes “first and foremost” among the considerations guiding Israeli policy was well demonstrated on *October 29, 1956*. Israel had launched repeated attacks in the months prior to this day, and on October 27th had ordered mobilization of her armed forces. On October 29th she launched a full-scale invasion of Egyptian territory in open connivance with England and France. By this Israel proved herself to be but a hand-maid of the European colonial powers. Their naval fleets paved the way and their attack on Port Said made it possible for the Israeli forces to advance into the Gaza sector and Sinai. Israel ignored the demand for immediate withdrawal made by the UN General Assembly on November 2, 1956, choosing instead to continue her aggression.

¹³*New York Times*, April 6-7, 1956.

As Israeli forces invaded the Gaza sector, untold atrocities were committed against the defenseless inhabitants, most of them refugees who had already suffered much from Zionist terror. The torture and mass annihilation perpetrated by Israel at this time was of unprecedented brutality. Not only were unarmed civilians massacred as the Israeli forces entered each town, but systematic and planned murder of young men of the villages was carried out; in Khan Yunis on November 4th, in Gaza on November 10th, and in Rafah on November 12th.

Successive resolutions by the General Assembly of the United Nations were passed, emphatically calling for the immediate withdrawal of the invading Israeli forces.¹⁴ A reluctant withdrawal only came as a result of the firm stand taken by the United Nations and world leaders.

14. THE TAWAFIQ INCIDENT

The Israel Digest of *December 25, 1959* quoted the "Basic Principles of the Government Program" agreed upon by the Israeli Parliament on December 17, 1959. One of these was said to be:

"The sincere desire to strengthen peace in the entire world and particularly in the Middle East."

A further demonstration of the meaning of Israel's "desire to strengthen peace" was given on *February 1, 1960*. In the early morning hours of this day, Israeli artillery and mortars began shelling the village and surrounding area of Tawafiq, located in the demilitarized zone on the Syrian frontier. Two hours later, Israeli armed forces with heavy trucks and armoured cars entered, occupied and demolished the village, which was fortified only by a trench and some barbed wire.¹⁵

The Israeli-Syrian Mixed Armistice Commission thoroughly investigated this incident and reported on February 16, 1960 that the attack had "resulted in the almost total destruction of the aforesaid village, in violation of elementary humanitarian principles, with two killed and two wounded on the Arab side." The investigation corroborated Syrian assertions that they had had no military fortifications in the area prior to the attack.¹⁶

This wanton destruction of an unarmed village, as well as the violation of Syrian air space by four Israeli jets on the same day as the attack, were forthrightly condemned by the Israeli-Syrian Mixed Armistice Commission on February 16, 1960.¹⁷

¹⁴UN Docs. 997/ES-I, 999/ES-I, 1002/ES-I, A/3385.

¹⁵UN Doc. S/4270, pp. 20-22.

¹⁶UN Doc. S/4270, Annex 4, p. 2.

¹⁷UN Doc. S/4270, Annex 4, pp. 1-3.

III. ISRAEL'S POLICY: WAR, DEFIANCE AND EXPANSION

The validity of Israel's peace offers has been negated not only by her continual acts of aggression, but also by the announced policies and qualifications Israel has placed upon a settlement. It is hardly reasonable to expect the Arabs to believe that her overtures are genuine when warlike statements are constantly being made by Israeli officials and intransigent positions taken on vital issues. Thus, actions aside, the Israeli Government has by its own statements belied its words of peace and dashed hopes for a just settlement in the Holy Land.

Israel's pronouncements reveal a total disregard for the authority and integrity of the United Nations and a consistent pattern of defiance towards the wishes of the world community. It stands to reason, therefore, that no desire for peaceful negotiations by one party can be deduced from a record permeated by acts of aggression and defiance.

The philosophy of "Eretz Israel," openly espoused by at least three Israeli political parties, as well as the Government policy of unlimited Jewish immigration to Israel, certainly are not conducive to future peace in the Holy Land. The Arab refugees, both Moslem and Christian, are told that there is no room for them in their country in which they legally own over 85% of the land, and yet people

of the Jewish faith throughout the world are coerced into settling there. What are the Arab people to think of peace offers in the light of the philosophy of an Israel extending from the Nile to the Euphrates, or of such statements by Ben-Gurion as that which termed Jews who live outside Israel as "godless"? Does not the espousal of unlimited Jewish immigration indicate that expansion is to be the means of realizing these designs? If there could be any doubt on this matter, one might point to the statements quoted in the following pages which reveal the true intentions of the rulers of Israel. It is in these proclamations that the real Israeli attitude towards peace can be discerned.

1. WAR AN INSTRUMENT OF POLICY

"I counsel the government to declare war upon the Arabs as this is the most suitable time for realizing our long-cherished dream otherwise the time would be too late to crush their power."

Moshe Sharett, former Minister for Foreign Affairs, from a statement made at a meeting held by the Mapai Party in 1950.

"It lies upon the people's shoulder to prepare for the war, but it lies upon the Israeli army to carry out the fight with the ultimate object of erecting the Israeli Empire."

Moshe Dayan, former Chief of Staff of the Israeli Army, from the Arabic program over the Israeli Radio, February 12, 1952.

"I accept to form the Cabinet on one condition and that is to utilize all possible means to expand towards the south."

David Ben-Gurion, Prime Minister of Israel, from a speech delivered at a meeting held by the Mapai Party at Beersheba in 1952.

"I deeply believe in launching preventive war against the Arab states without further hesitation. By doing so we will achieve two targets firstly the annihilation of the Arab power and secondly the expansion of our territory."

Menachem Begin, leader of the Herut Party, from a statement made in the Israeli Parliament on October 12, 1955.

"United States officials are studying with mounting concern recent evidence indicating that Israel, with the assistance of France, may be developing the capacity to produce atomic weapons. . . . Intelligence reports have indicated that French technicians are involved and that the reactor is of the same type

built by France for producing plutonium for her first atomic weapon.”

New York Times,
December 19, 1960.

2. FORCE A MEANS OF HOLDING ADDITIONAL ARAB TERRITORY

“All that we have taken we shall hold.”

David Ben-Gurion, *Rebirth and Destiny of Israel*, New York: Philosophical Library, 1954, p. 247 (From a radio broadcast, June 10, 1948).

“We heard the astonishing and damaging declaration of Sir Anthony Eden . . . that peace between Israel and the Arabs would not be possible until preliminary solutions had been found for the problems of the refugees, our frontiers and the Jordan waters . . . I am convinced that Britain’s present Prime Minister, Sir Anthony Eden, knows very well that Israel’s frontiers could not be altered to our detriment without a bloody war, a war of life and death.”

David Ben-Gurion, commenting on a proposal made by Sir Anthony Eden in April 1955, *Jewish Observer and Middle East Review*, Vol. IV, No. 18, May 6, 1955, p. 3.

“The Prime Minister said that Israel ‘will do everything in its power to maintain the status quo on the frontiers and in neighboring countries. If there were any breakdown in law or order . . . which could result in a possible threat to Israel’s security, Israel’s reaction would have to be judged according to the situation’.”

David Ben-Gurion as quoted in *The Israel Digest*, Vol. II, No. 24, December 27, 1959.

3. INTERNATIONALIZATION OF JERUSALEM A “WICKED” COUNSEL

“Every year, every month, validates our positive achievements: our wider bounds, the advance of Jewish Jerusalem and its embodiment into the State, are far more convincing than any formal recommendation of the United Nations that is still-born. Even in the question of the Arab refugees, time is not working against us.”

David Ben-Gurion, *Rebirth and Destiny of Israel*, 1954, p. 484 (From: *The Israel Government Yearbook*, October, 1952).

“The United Nations . . . saw fit . . . to decide that our eternal capital should become a corpus separatum under international control . . . Our rebuttal of this wicked counsel was unequivocal.”

cal and resolute: the Government and Knesseth at once moved their seat to Jerusalem, and made it Israel's crown and capital, irrevocably and for all men to see."

Ibid.; p. 362

(From a broadcast in 1950).

4. THE ARABS OF PALESTINE HAVE NO ROOM IN THEIR OWN COUNTRY

"The clock cannot be put back . . . The individual return of Arab refugees to their former places of residence is an impossible thing."

From an official statement made by the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs on July 28, 1949 to the Technical Committee of the Palestine Conciliation Commission. UN Doc. A/1367, Annex IV, Chapter 3, Section E, Para. 1.

"My Government cannot approve or endorse Ambassador Labrousse's (Former Director of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees) proposal that a procedure of free choice between repatriation and compensation be offered to the refugees. . . . It is quite improper for the question whether people shall or shall not enter Israel to be dealt with outside the framework of Israel's sovereign consent."

From a statement made by the Representative of Israel at the United Nations. UN Doc. GA/10/20, November 18, 1955.

"Israel told the United Nations emphatically today that she refused to consider any general return of Arab refugees in the present circumstances."

New York Times,
November 29, 1960.

5. DEFIANCE A PATTERN OF BEHAVIOUR

"These assassinations constitute a critical challenge from an unbridled band of Jewish terrorists to the very effort of United Nations to achieve, by means of mediation, a peaceful adjustment of the dispute in Palestine. In a broader sense, they give evidence not only of contempt for the actions of the Security Council, but also of a cynical disregard for the United Nations as a whole."

Dr. Ralph Bunche, commenting on the assassination of Count Folke Bernadotte, United Nations Mediator in Palestine, on September 17, 1948, in the Israeli-held new Jerusalem. (From a report submitted on September 27, 1948 to the President of the Security Council, UN Doc. S/1018.)

"These (UN) resolutions no longer live, nor will they rise again."

David Ben-Gurion, as quoted in the *Jewish Observer and Middle East Review*, Vol. IV, No. 18, May 6, 1955, p. 3.

"The armistice agreement with Egypt is dead and buried and will never be resurrected."

David Ben-Gurion as quoted in *Jewish Observer and Middle East Review*, Vol. V, No. 46, November 16, 1956, p. 14.

"Israel does not agree in any circumstances that a foreign force — whatever its name may be — shall be stationed in its territories or in one of those territories which Israel now occupies."

Ibid, p. 15.

6. EXPANSION AS AN AVOWED OBJECTIVE

"This is not the real map of Israel. You have to strive ardently by conquest or by diplomacy, to establish the Israeli Empire which must cover the whole territory from the Nile to the Euphrates."

David Ben-Gurion, from a speech to the students of the Hebrew University in 1950.

"To maintain the status quo will not do. We have set up a dynamic State, bent upon . . . expansion."

David Ben-Gurion, *Rebirth and Destiny of Israel*, 1954, p. 419. (From: *The Israel Government Yearbook*, October, 1951).

"Every State consists of a land and a people. Israel is no exception, but it is a State identical neither with its land nor with its people . . . I add now that it has been established in only a portion of the Land of Israel. Some are hesitant as to the restoration of our historical frontiers, fixed and set from the beginning of time, but even they will hardly deny the anomaly of the new lines."

Ibid, p.. 466.

(From: *The Israel Government Yearbook*, October, 1952).

"Our forces did not infringe upon the territory of the land of Egypt and did not even attempt to do so. . . . Our operations were restricted to the area of the Sinai Peninsula."

David Ben-Gurion, as quoted in the *Jewish Observer and Middle East Review*, Vol. V, No. 46, November 16, 1956, p. 11.

"Israel intends to use the waters of the Jordan River regardless of what the Arabs may do about it, Premier David Ben-Gurion

declared today. He said that neither President Eisenhower nor Dag Hammarskjöld, Secretary General of the United Nations, attempted to dissuade him from this during his recent visit to the United States."

New York Times, March 19, 1960.

7. ISRAEL'S HOSTILITY TOWARD ANY PEACE MOVE

Israel has resisted vigorously every peaceful effort to solve the Palestine question within the United Nations and outside of it. The following is the eloquent proof:

The Bandung Conference

In April 1955, a conference at Bandung, Indonesia brought together for the first time in their history as independent nations, representatives of twenty-nine States from the continents of Asia and Africa. Among the various problems and questions discussed at the conference was that of Palestine. The Conference's political committee adopted the following resolution:

"In view of the existing tension in the Middle East, caused by the situation in Palestine and of the danger of that tension to world peace, the Asian-African conference declares its full support of the rights of the Arab people of Palestine and calls for the implementation of the United Nations resolutions on Palestine and the achievement of the peaceful settlement of the Palestine question."¹⁸

Israel reacted to this decision on May 1, 1955 when Mr. Ben-Gurion, in his "Independence Day" speech, stated, referring to the United Nations resolutions, that they "no longer live, nor will they rise again." He added: "We heard only a few days before Independence Day the most shameful accusations being made at the Asian-African Conference in Bandung. A short time before that we were witnesses of the flagrant partiality of the Security Council," a reference to the Council's resolution condemning Israel for the Gaza raid ordered by Ben-Gurion in February.

The Dulles Peace Proposal

The concern expressed by the Asian-African Conference at Bandung manifested itself in other quarters. On August 27, 1955, the late Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, called for "fresh constructive efforts" to achieve a settlement of this dispute. Addressing the Council on Foreign Relations in New York and speaking "with the authority of President Eisenhower," Mr. Dulles suggested that an "international loan" might be raised "to enable Israel to pay the

¹⁸League of Arab States, *Report by the Secretary-General on The First Asian-African Conference*, Cairo, 1955, p. 95 (emphasis added).

compensation which is due" to the Arab refugees whose "tragic plight" he referred to. On the question of boundaries, the then Secretary emphasized that the present boundaries "were not designed to be permanent frontiers" and that no guarantees could be given before agreement is reached on the nature of the boundaries. He also referred to the status of Jerusalem saying that the United States would support "a United Nations review of this problem."¹⁹

On the other hand the Israelis gave a cool reception to the proposal, which was indeed mild, and tantamount to a review of United Nations resolutions. They merely asked for "clarification" on some points. It was not long, however, before the Dulles proposals came under heavy Zionist criticism. In commenting on what they described as the Secretary's "New Look," the London *Jewish Observer* stated that

"... he allowed himself to be exposed dangerously on one point. In asserting that there must be an Israel-Arab agreement on all main points before there can be a guarantee for Israel's frontiers, he has given hostages to the Arabs in much the same way as did the British Government in its lamentable, and now universally condemned, White Paper of 1939."²⁰

Few analogies in the Zionist dictionary could be less complimentary.

The Dulles proposals were received enthusiastically, according to reports at the time, by the United Nations Secretary-General and were endorsed the following day by the United Kingdom Government. The latter signified their desire, expressed earlier in an address by the Prime Minister to Parliament on April 4, 1955, to guarantee any territorial settlement agreed upon by the parties concerned. Mr. Dulles reiterated his proposals before the United Nations General Assembly on September 22, 1955 in the hope that "... many aspects of this problem would eventually come to the United Nations for its action at some future session."

Eden Peace Proposal

The next such development came on November 9, 1955 when the then British Prime Minister, Sir Anthony Eden, delivered a statement of policy at the traditional Lord Mayor's banquet. In discussing the Arab-Israeli dispute, the Prime Minister referred to attempts during the preceding seven years "... to bring about some kind of settlement. . ." He further noted that "... the reception given to Mr. Dulles' proposals last August was by no means discouraging."

¹⁹*The New York Times*, August 27, 1955.

²⁰*The Jewish Observer*, September 2, 1955.

The prevention of war was declared “. . . our immediate task.” He reiterated the United Kingdom Government’s desire to guarantee acceptable frontiers and proceeded to outline the prevailing situation as follows:

“The position today is that the Arabs on the one side take their stand on the 1947 and other United Nations resolutions. That is where they are. They have said that they would be willing to open discussions with Israel from that basis. The Israelis, on the other side, found themselves on the later armistice agreement of 1949, and on the present territories which they occupy. Now, My Lord Mayor, between those two positions, there is, of course, a wide gap. It is not right, I agree, that United Nations resolutions should be ignored, but equally can it be maintained the United Nations resolutions on Palestine can now be put into operation just as they stand? The stark truth is that if these nations want to win a peace . . . they must make some compromise between these two positions.”²¹

This mild and innocuous proposal that brought into doubt the application of the United Nations resolutions evoked the loudest storm of protest from Israel. On November 12th, the then Foreign Minister, Mr. Moshe Sharett, declared:

“There is no prospect whatsoever of getting us to agree to anything of the sort. . . . We are not prepared to cede any area which we *today* regard as our own and in which we have in the last seven years conducted far reaching operations of economic development and settlement.** *The very fact that a great power is suggesting it encourages people to nurture illusions as to the possibility of settlement. Instead of breeding a realistic spirit of accepting existing facts and accommodating themselves thereto, it is only liable to excite appetites which can never be fulfilled. For all these reasons, I am inclined to deplore the statement that has been made.*”²²

Yugoslav Mediation

It was in the midst of these circumstances that Israel received what was tantamount to a mediation offer from President Tito of Yugoslavia. His offer was rejected by the Israeli Government without delay. A *New York Times* correspondent reported from Jerusalem the following expose of Israel’s position, given at an interview by Dr. Walter Eytan, Director General of the Foreign Ministry:

²¹British Information Services, Official Text, “Speech by the Right Honourable Sir Anthony Eden, etc. . . .” November 10, 1955.

**During 1949 and 1950, Israel established 114 Jewish settlements in territories she occupied in excess of the area allotted to the Jewish State in the Partition Resolution.

²²*The Jerusalem Post*, November 13, 1955, (emphasis added)

"Over the weekend, Israel sent a memorandum to Yugoslavia stressing that mediation by Yugoslavia was not welcome. . ."

Attempts to Find A Peaceful Solution by the Kennedy Administration

The inauguration of the new United States Administration into office in the first month of 1961 brought with it added affirmations on the part of the Administration of its desire to conduct an energetic foreign policy aimed at promoting the cause of international peace and the settlement of outstanding disputes. In one of his first public pronouncements, Vice-President Lyndon B. Johnson, addressing the B'nai Zion in New York on February 5th, affirmed that the new Administration intended "to work for peace" in the Middle East and elsewhere.²³

While the Zionists voiced their anxieties over this trend in public alarms, the Israeli Government maintained an official silence. It was not long, however, before they espoused the misgivings of their fellow Zionists. On March 31st, it was reported from Israel that "Premier David Ben-Gurion advised President Kennedy today against attempting to impose a Middle East settlement upon Israel and the Arab States." The report continued:

"Mr. Ben-Gurion's remarks (in a local newspaper interview) appeared to be connected to a reported Israeli diplomatic effort in Washington to talk the Kennedy Administration out of attempting to implement the President's campaign pledge to initiate a Middle East settlement.

The Israelis fear that such an initiative would lead to American pressure upon them to take back refugees or to yield territory to their Arab neighbours."²⁴

The five moves, discussed above, have exposed to the world the truth of Israel's unabashed intransigence. By their own words her officials have revealed just how fervently they are pursuing 'peace.' This was indeed made clear on April 26, 1956, when Foreign Minister Sharett told the assembled delegates attending the 24th World Zionist Congress: "Let me assure you that Israel stands in no need of being pressed into (peace) either from without or from within."²⁵

²³*Congressional Record*, February 9, 1961.

²⁴*The New York Times*, April 1, 1961.

²⁵Ministry for Foreign Affairs (Israel), *Israel's Peace Offers to the Arab States, 1948-1958, The Record*, Government Printing Office, 1958, p. 54.

IV. THE PROSPECTS FOR THE FUTURE

Thus, in words and deeds Israel has ruled out in advance the possibility of yielding on any of the major unresolved issues, thereby making negotiation an obvious impossibility. On the repatriation of the Arab refugees, on the renunciation of excess territory and on the projected international status of Jerusalem she remains adamantly defiant, rebuffing all genuine efforts to reach a solution. By seeking to predetermine the outcome of negotiations on any of these matters, she only strives to thwart the United Nations mandates on Palestine and to force a solution on her own terms based on the status quo. Israel's peace overtures are not genuine, therefore, and can only be regarded as demands for surrender. As such they can scarcely be termed peace offers. Her position lacks both moral and legal validity.

In the last of a series of fifteen pronouncements, the United Nations General Assembly has unanimously demanded the repatriation of the Arab refugees as a basic principle for peace. In the face of the expressed wishes of the world body, Israel, nevertheless, has remained intransigent, which fact prompted none other than Senator J. W. Fulbright, Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations of the U.S. Senate, to state on June 15, 1960, following a trip to the Middle East: "I cannot help but feel that the longer this problem remains unsolved, the greater the likelihood that responsibility for the problem will be viewed as resting on Israel . . ."

Against this background William Zukerman has placed the repeated outcries for peace by Israel in their true perspective. He stated:

"The fact is that the Israeli government's peace is as far from real peace as blatant propaganda is from the truth. It has been shouted so loudly and so often by Ben-Gurion and other leaders of Israel for the last twelve years that it is well on the way to becoming a cliché of the century."²⁶

As long as the state of Israel remains dedicated to a policy of force and aggression, unabashedly committed to the blatant practice of discrimination and injustice, indifferent to the fate of one million human beings, determined upon winning the loyalty of citizens of other countries who believe in Judaism, and defiant toward public law and order, the realization of peace in the area is bound to remain a far-fetched possibility. Instead of a durable peace, uncertainty and fear will continue to prevail. It is the attitude of Israel to these and related questions which will determine the fate of peace in Palestine. So far Israel has shown no signs of abandoning her arrogant pursuit of the said policies, nor has she demonstrated any respect for the integrity of the United Nations or for the earnest endeavors of its members to solve the Palestine problem. On the contrary, she has brought the whole of humanity, on more than one occasion, to the verge of a total war. It remains to be seen, however, whether she can indefinitely run counter to the rules of God and of man in her indifference towards the destruction of an entire people and in her betrayal of the principles of the Charter.

Contrary to her expectations, Israel today faces a regenerated Arab society, determined more than ever to ward off any threat and to stand by justice and the rule of law. She faces an Arab nation which has already reasserted its rightful place among the community of nations. She faces the justice of the cause of the Arabs of Palestine, who, despite their forced exile for the last thirteen years, have not wavered in their firm determination to return to their ancestral homes and to recover their lost human rights. Likewise, she faces a world public opinion, awakening to an awareness of the rights of the Arab refugees, and to the errors and injustices of the past. In the words of President Nasser, "The only solution to Palestine . . . is that matters should be restored to normalcy and should return to the condition prevailing before the error was committed." In restating Arab policy on Palestine, he continued: "One of the extremely important matters is that the United Nations should not forget itself.

²⁶*Jewish Newsletter*, Nov. 28, 1960.

It should not forget its Charter and it should not forget its resolutions. Otherwise, we would be encouraging those who tried to disregard the United Nations and ignore its existence.”²⁷ Hence the fate of peace in the Holy Land depends on the course of action which the Israeli leaders will choose to pursue.

²⁷From a speech delivered on September 27, 1960 by Gamal Abdel Nasser, President of the United Arab Republic, at the General Assembly of the United Nations. UN Doc. A/PV. 873.

Arab citizens are concentrated mainly in Western Galilee and Little Triangle.

Legend:

- ISRAEL (cross-hatched pattern)
- EXTRA TERRITORY OCCUPIED BY ISRAEL (solid grey)
- ARAB STATES (white)

Geographical features and locations labeled on the map include:

- LEBANON
- WESTERN GALILEE
- HAIFA
- ACRE
- TYBERIAS
- QARMUK R.
- JORDAN
- DEAD SEA
- BEERSHEBA
- EL AUJA
- GAZA STRIP
- GAZA
- JERUSALEM
- LITTLE TRIANGLE
- JAFFA
- U.A.R. (EGYPT)
- AQABA

ISRAEL

EXTRA TERRITORY
OCCUPIED BY ISRAEL

☐ ARAB STATES

WESTERN GALILEE

LEBANON

UAR (SYRIA)

1. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 1997; 277: 1033-1037.

Горюх Р.

JAFFA

LITTLE TRIANGLE

JERUSALEM

A map showing Jerusalem and the Jordan River. The river flows from the top right towards the bottom left, passing by Jerusalem. The city is depicted as a shaded area near the river.

GAZA STRIP • GAZA

Geershepa

• EL AUJA

U.A.R.
(EGYPT)

INDEX

Aqaba

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